

SCAPA Banquet Speech

Greg Misner

An “Artist”. As vague a notion an “artist” is, it was my answer to the renowned childhood question, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” Of course, at that time I was referring to the visual arts, but as my life panned out that word gained new meaning and variations. I found that an artist could be a writer, an instrumentalist, a dancer, an actor, a singer, and all-round performer. This became apparent to me through experimentation in all of these fields. Since being a toddler I’ve been drawing, painting, or writing and creating dorky fantasy stories. When I was in elementary school, I took, and quit, lessons in piano and violin. In middle school I played percussion and took lessons in tap dance, but gave both of those up before starting high school. In high school I have delved into theater and choir, but may give those up when I go into college. After all this personal research, I came to the conclusion that I can always go back to a pencil or brush to conjure up a satisfying passion that has always been there for me, and, I believe, will be there my whole life.

I’m not trying to say that I’m an expert in any of these fields of art, but merely saying that I’ve tried them and have been there. As artists, generally speaking of course, we may have multiple passions that stem from different sources, allowing us to express ourselves through physical movement, resonating sounds, or placing ideas onto paper or into hand made objects. We are inquisitive. It is only natural for us to seek out beauty in the world, or to search for new ideas. Through the performing or visual arts we can find this beauty or discover these ideas.

Focusing on one art can be tough, though usually there is at least one that can stand out for us. Through the School for the Creative and Performing Arts an artist is able to focus on that one art. Having an opportunity to do this early in life is a wonderful gift that may be easy to take for granted. Without it we may not have been able to hone our talents with professional guidance given to us at such a young age. The fourth grade to seniority in high school is an important time for students to work on their gifts, so it is no wonder that SCAPA has produced successful artists. SCAPA is a close-knit community of creativity and a wonderful environment to grow up in. Our minds are stimulated by our teachers and further by our peers: the friends we make that share our interests, or even the self-made rivals that create a constructive competition that only makes us wish to better ourselves. Whether we have friends for support or competition to encourage us, we are growing as artists together, and not alone.

Even though my time with SCAPA was short, starting as a junior, I have gained insight into what I am capable of in these past two years. I am thoroughly grateful to have had the opportunity that was given to me.

Fellow Senior SCAPA students, we need to look at where we've come from and what we've accomplished as artists. We are about to enter a world that can look uncertain, whether we go into an artist's field or not. We may venture off to other interests or continue to develop on the talents we have focused on thus far. Either way we will always be known as SCAPA graduates, and will take that with us into our lives forever. We are a talented group of individuals, and we must always remember that. Some of us may turn our gifts into hobbies and some of us may turn them into a profession. As for me, I look forward with excitement to major in Studio Art at the

University of Kentucky. I'm fascinated to see where my passion can take me and what I am capable of.

In the future, I hope we can all continue to use the arts as a means of expression and maybe even a source of therapeutic energy. I have the feeling that our lives thus far have been more like a breeze than what is to come, but in the end we will always have our talents to go back to.

I would like to thank the SCAPA Lafayette faculty for selecting me as one of the recipients of the Don Trivette SCAPA Fine Arts Award. I am grateful to have been selected for this honor. I would also like to thank the faculty for their time and insight, without them we could not be here. Thank you SCAPA for all the wonderful opportunities you have given us.